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Sports and physical education: Present situation & future outlook

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Abstract

In today's world characterized by the Space Age and the automation era, a significant portion of the population leads increasingly sedentary lifestyles. This trend is marked by preferences for riding over walking, sitting over standing, and spectating over participating in physical activities. Consequently, there is a pressing need for physical education to be integrated into daily life as part of a balanced lifestyle. It is widely acknowledged that physical education and sports play a crucial role in fostering an active and healthy lifestyle, offering a solution to the global challenge of rising obesity rates. However, the status of physical education and sports is deteriorating, posing a significant challenge for developing countries. Establishing connections with developed nations to seek guidance and support is imperative in addressing this issue. In reality, structured physical education encompasses a much broader scope and significance. It is imperative that it be recognized as an integral component of school curriculums in India, catering to its young and socio-economically diverse population. Physical education, when integrated into school systems, can serve as a powerful tool for holistic development among Indian children. Physical education not only fosters physical fitness but also facilitates the social growth of children. It instills self-confidence, cultivates leadership skills, promotes teamwork, and fosters inclusivity and sportsmanship. In this context, it is essential to explore the multifaceted benefits of physical education for children, emphasizing its role in nurturing a healthier and more socially adept youth.

Keywords: Children, physical education, sports, youth

Introduction

The importance of physical education in today's world cannot be overstated. In an era dominated by technology and automation, people are leading increasingly sedentary lifestyles, opting for convenience over activity. This shift towards inactivity is causing a surge in health problems such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and musculoskeletal issues like back and joint pain. To combat this trend, it's crucial to prioritize physical education as an integral part of a balanced lifestyle.

Physical education and sports play a vital role in promoting an active and healthy lifestyle from a young age. By instilling habits of regular physical activity early on, we can mitigate the risk of developing chronic health conditions later in life. Additionally, engaging in physical activity has proven benefits for mental well-being, contributing to reduced stress and improved cognitive function.

While many countries include physical education in their school curriculum, the effectiveness of these programs varies. Often, insufficient emphasis is placed on providing meaningful and engaging physical education lessons, resulting in decreased participation and limited exposure to physical activity for children and youth.

To address this issue, a holistic approach is needed, encompassing both physical activity and nutrition education. By promoting a physically and mentally active lifestyle alongside healthy dietary habits, we can empower individuals to take control of their health and well-being from an early age.

Furthermore, it's essential to foster a culture that values and prioritizes physical activity in all aspects of life, including education, work, and leisure. This requires collaboration between policymakers, educators, healthcare professionals, and communities to create environments that support and encourage active living.

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In conclusion, the promotion of physical education and sports is not only essential for combating rising obesity rates and preventing chronic diseases but also for fostering overall well-being and healthy development. By investing in comprehensive physical education programs and creating supportive environments for physical activity, we can empower future generations to lead active, fulfilling lives.

Research Methodology

Secondary data and relevant literature have been thoroughly reviewed for this paper. In addition to scholarly sources, internet resources have been examined to gather comprehensive information. Previous studies, surveys, and existing literature have been consulted to gain insight and stimulate discussion on the topic at hand. By drawing from a diverse range of sources, this paper aims to present a well-rounded perspective and contribute meaningfully to the discourse on the subject.

Purpose of study

The study seeks to underscore the significance of physical education in contemporary fast-paced lifestyles and evaluate its reception in the modern era, along with its future potential. A substantial portion of individuals' savings could be directed towards development initiatives if they weren't required to allocate it towards healthcare expenses. Physical education stands poised as a potent means to conserve individuals' hard-earned funds that would otherwise be needlessly disbursed on medical fees.

Current trends of Physical Education in Society

The concerning issue revolves around the declining state of physical education and sports. It poses a significant challenge for developing nations to establish connections with developed countries to seek guidance from their coaches and authorities. Through such collaborations, developing countries can gain insights into world-class infrastructure and technological advancements in sports. The focus should be on enhancing physical education within educational institutions to uplift sports.

While cricket enjoys immense popularity in countries like India, being a media-friendly sport that elevates players' financial status, it shouldn't overshadow other sports. While cricket should maintain its significance, attention must also be directed towards promoting other sports.

Key findings from the World Summit on Physical Education and Sports at Magglingen include:

Establishing quality standards and benchmarks for physical education rooted in scientific evidence, contributing notably to personal and community development.

Formulating effective and adaptable strategies to safeguard and enhance physical education as a fundamental aspect of education.

Integrating globally recognized, culturally sensitive physical education policies into education and sports policies worldwide.

Misconceptions about physical education

Physical education is a multifaceted discipline, yet unfortunately, its importance often goes unrecognized. Many people are confused about the essence of this subject, mistaking it for mere physical training drills or PT exercises. Some perceive physical education as solely involving competitive activities like football, hockey, or races, which is not entirely accurate. There's also a misconception that

physical education is primarily about shaping the body or purely for recreational purposes.

These misunderstandings have led to various misconceptions about the subject. Some of these misconceptions include:

1. Physical education is solely about physical training exercises.
2. It exclusively involves competitive sports activities.
3. Its main objective is to shape the body.
4. Physical education is only for recreation, fun, and enjoyment.

In reality, physical education encompasses a wide range of activities aimed at promoting holistic health and well-being. It involves educating individuals about the importance of physical fitness, developing motor skills, fostering teamwork and cooperation, promoting lifelong physical activity habits, and enhancing overall quality of life. By dispelling these misconceptions and recognizing the true value of physical education, individuals can fully appreciate its role in personal development and societal health.

Importance of Physical Education in Indian children

Structured physical education should be integrated as a fundamental component of school curriculums in India. For a nation with a young and socio-economically diverse population, physical education within schools holds the potential to serve as a comprehensive developmental tool for Indian children. However, many schools in India have yet to successfully incorporate structured physical education into their curriculum. Instead, the primary focus remains on traditional academic subjects, without recognizing the significant contributions that a structured physical education curriculum can make to the overall development of young learners, including their physical, mental, emotional, and social growth.

With nearly 29.5% of India's population being under 14 years old (according to the Indian Census, 2011), physical education stands as a crucial tool for fostering the holistic development of children from various socio-economic backgrounds. This is particularly relevant in urban areas of India, where the prevalence of obesity among children, especially those from more affluent backgrounds, has become a pressing issue.

Physical education not only promotes physical fitness but also plays a pivotal role in supporting mental health by offering motivation and combating depression, while simultaneously contributing to emotional development. In a country where the education system is heavily entrenched in a competitive exam culture, which places immense pressure on students, physical education can serve as a valuable counterbalance.

Moreover, physical education fosters the social growth of children by instilling self-confidence, promoting leadership skills, teaching teamwork, and encouraging inclusivity and sportsmanship. These are values that are challenging to impart solely through textbooks but can be effectively and enjoyably taught through practical engagement in physical education activities.

By recognizing the multifaceted benefits of structured physical education and prioritizing its integration into school curriculums, India can nurture well-rounded individuals capable of thriving in all aspects of life.

Future trends and Challenges

The decline of school and college health and physical education programs is a global challenge in today's world. Integrating the importance of health with academic

performance, as reflected in report cards and grades, poses a significant challenge. Despite efforts such as the World Summit on Physical Education in 1999 and government policies aiming to incorporate physical education and sports into compulsory curricula, there is considerable resistance to actual implementation.

The current challenges can be examined through the following points

1. Recognizing and addressing the issues and challenges faced by both young people and physical education teachers
2. Understanding the concepts and principles of effective teaching and learning, curriculum development, and program implementation.
3. Identifying and nurturing talent in sports, including the development of pathways for talent identification and development.
4. Recognizing the pivotal role of coaches and effectively managing their involvement in school settings.
5. Providing counseling and raising awareness about the importance of physical education and sports among students, parents, and educators.
6. Investing in state-of-the-art infrastructure and modern facilities for sports to meet the demands of the contemporary world.
7. Promoting and supporting female participation in sports by creating environments and facilities that cater to the specific needs of female athletes.

Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from policymakers, educators, parents, and communities to prioritize the value of physical education and sports in nurturing healthy, well-rounded individuals. By overcoming these obstacles, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for promoting physical activity and holistic development among young people.

Results

Physical education and sports hold promising future prospects if channeled effectively. The primary focus should be on acknowledging current inadequacies and implementing appropriate programs to address them. A meticulously crafted systematic health plan that encompasses various physical education and sports activities has the potential to significantly alleviate the prevailing global health challenges. Furthermore, such initiatives are likely to enhance the overall performance standards in global sports across competitive domains.

Discussions

It is a great challenge in today's world to integrate the importance of health with the marks – cards and grades. Even though some government policies have planned to implement physical education and sports in the compulsory curriculum, still in reality it has lots of obstacles to materialize.

Conclusion

Considering the above discussion, it is evident that physical education in India often receives insufficient attention within the education system, with many schools failing to recognize its importance. However, physical education offers numerous advantages, and some schools have successfully integrated it alongside academic pursuits to promote both physical fitness and intellectual development. Implementing a well-designed systematic health plan that incorporates various physical

education and sports activities holds the potential to mitigate the current global health challenges. Furthermore, such initiatives have the capacity to reduce individual healthcare expenses and contribute to overall economic well-being.

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